

Burmese Days

AFTER carrying out operations on a comparatively small scale for a couple of years, Irrawaddy Flotilla and Airways now propose to extend their routes. A service has recently been opened between Mandalay, Rangoon and Yenangyaung, with intermediate stops, and another service will shortly be opened to include Tavoy. Previously, only sea-planes have been used, but aerodromes are now in course of preparation at various points.

The Flying Doctors

THE Commonwealth Government has agreed to grant a subsidy of £5,000 per annum towards the layout and upkeep of the Australian Aerial Medical Services' bases. The estimated annual expenditure on the four present bases—Cloncurry, Wyndham, Port Hedland, and Broken Hill—is about £14,000. Wyndham, incidentally, has recently been equipped with a radio station, which appears to be working very satisfactorily.

The Legal Side

The Law of Civil Aviation, by N. H. Moller, M.A., LL.M. (Cantab) (Sweet and Maxwell, Ltd., 2 & 3, Chancery Lane, London, W.C.2. 25s.).

TO collect all the information, analogous and otherwise, concerning the legal principles behind the operation of air transport, and to give a wide series of precedential law cases must be a difficult, not to say heartbreaking job. However, a standard work of reference in these lines has been badly needed for a long time, and will be an indispensable addition to the libraries of both airline operators and airport managers.

Mr. Moller, who has previously applied himself to the business of sorting out trade agreements, has done the job well in *The Law of Civil Aviation*, which is divided into two sections. The first of these is primarily concerned with the general trend of orders and regulations, while the second deals with the less thoroughly established principles. Ten appendices cover the actual details of the conventions, acts and regulations.

A few months ago we reviewed a somewhat similar book entitled *International Organisation in European Air Transport*. This, however, dealt with the historical and political aspect of the problems involved, and the two books do not clash in essential appeal or value.

Another Step

ON Saturday another move in the development of the new Empire mail plan was made when *Centaurus* left Hythe, Southampton, with mails for Alexandria. Capts. L. A. Egglefield and E. S. Alcock were in command, and the machine is expected to reach its preliminary destination to-day. *Centaurus* will, of course, remain in the Mediterranean on the normal service from Brindisi.

Caledonia, the long-range boat, incidentally, should shortly be leaving Southampton on the first of a series of experimental flights—probably to India and back with the mails. The pilots will be Capts. W. N. Cummings and G. T. Powell.

The Croydon Disaster

BEYOND placing the tragedy on record, very little can at present be said about the causes of the accident to the K.L.M. Douglas D.C.2 at Croydon on December 9, when fourteen persons were killed. One of the survivors has since died, and among the victims were Admiral S. A. A. Lindman, twice Prime Minister of Sweden, and Senor Juan de la Cierva, an appreciation of whose life and work appears on page 654.

The Douglas, piloted by Commander Hautzmayer, left the control tower in 50-yard visibility at 10.30 a.m., after half an hour's delay, and started its take-off run down the white line, which lies approximately east to west. Apparently the machine left this line, possibly owing to a momentary difference in power output between the two engines, before it was airborne, and certainly turned to port long before a pilot would normally attempt to start turning on to course in such conditions. The swing may have been more pronounced than was imagined by the pilot, but the climb appeared to be normal, though towards rising ground on the south-west side of the airport. For this reason the machine touched a chimney on a house in Hillcrest Road and dived into another on the opposite side of the road. Fortunately, the house was empty, and both this and its semi-detached neighbour were burnt with the machine.

Lord Swinton sent the following message of sympathy to Dr. Colijn at the Hague: "Greatly distressed to hear of deplorable accident to K.L.M. aircraft at Croydon to-day. Please accept my sincere sympathies.—Swinton."

Comment appears on page 644 and in the Croydon Notes.

USING THE AIR ARM

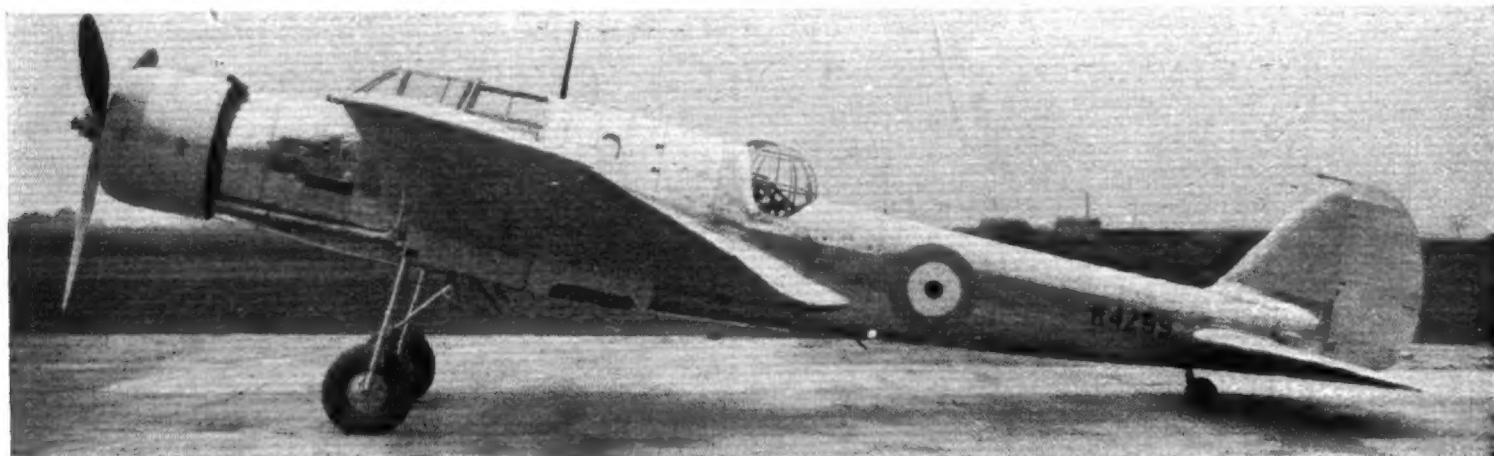
"*Air Power and Armies*," by Wing-Commander J. C. Slessor, M.C. (Oxford University Press, 10s. 6d. net.)

IN these days when talk about air defence goes on all round, it is quite a change to come across a book which deals with the work of aircraft in a land campaign. This book is based on a series of lectures delivered at the Army Staff College at Camberley between 1931 and 1934, and it deals with questions far beyond the scope of the reconnaissance work of the so-called army co-operation squadrons.

The writer's strong point is not lucidity of style, and the book does not make easy reading. It is, however, so full of ideas that a careful perusal is well repaid. It should certainly be studied at the R.A.F. Staff College at Andover, and perhaps it is so studied. All higher ranks of the R.A.F. ought to be trained in the theories of aircraft as an arm of the Army,

for Wing-Cdr. Slessor holds that "air contingents for any overseas expedition must be drawn from the Air Defences of Great Britain." At present, certainly, there is nowhere else to draw them from, but as the Metropolitan Air Force is being brought up by degrees to the strength considered necessary for Home Defence, it is certain that all sorts of objections would be raised to sending any portion of it overseas. That is a very weak point in our present organisation, and our air strength ought to be such that the despatch of an expeditionary air contingent with the Army would leave our Home defences undepleted.

Wing-Cdr. Slessor holds that there are three classes of objective at which an army's air arm can strike: (a) troops; (b) supply, and (c) production. The occasion for selecting each of those objectives should be carefully chosen. When a battle



APPROACH TO A PROBLEM—II: Built to Air Ministry specification P.27/32 this new Armstrong Whitworth monoplane has a Tiger VIII fourteen-cylinder radial with two-speed supercharger driving a D.H. variable-pitch airscrew. Another view appears on page 651. (R.A.F. Official photograph.)